

# The Piglet with the Perfectly Straight Tail

Original Title: *Grisungen med den rette halen*

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English sample translated from Norwegian by Olivia Lasky

One ordinary summer day, Piglet discovered something shocking:  
He didn't have a curl in his tail!

He looked around the pigpen.

All of the other pigs had nice, curly tails.

All of them except for Piglet. His was perfectly straight.

"I don't have a curl in my tail!" he grunted.

The other young pigs stopped playing and stared at him.

Even Prickly Pig came over to take a look.

"Well, I never," she said.

Her words felt like a kick in Piglet's gut.

"Is that weird? Is there something wrong with me?" he asked.

"Hmm, well, it's a bit strange because you have lots of love and dirt. So you should have a little bend, at the very least."

"But how can I get a curl in my tail, then?"

"Beats me," said Prickly Pig before plodding off to cool down in the mud.

Piglet felt that something was missing with every bone in his body.

The other young pigs gathered around him.

Every single one of them had springy curls in their tails and a thousand questions.

"Why's your tail like that?"

"Maybe you need some milk?"

"Do you need a hug?"

"Are you hungry?"

"Do you need more vitamin D?"

"Do you have a stuffy snout?"

"Do you want to play?"

"Did you get a sunburn or something?"

"Maybe this is just the way you are?"

Piglet's face flushed with shame.

"Just the way I am?" he whispered.

Little Girl came walking over the yard, carrying a big, heavy bucket beneath the blazing hot sun.

“Heeere, piggy pigs!” she called out.

The other young pigs jumped up and started grunting and snorting.

Prickly Pig hopped up from the mud and waited eagerly by the trough.

Little Girl poured out the food and chit-chatted with the pigs as they scarfed it down with glee.

Everyone except for Piglet.

He couldn’t think about anything besides what he’d discovered.

His cheeks burned as he sat down in the shade behind the shed.

He stared at his tail, lying there so stupidly long. And it was so stupidly *straight*.

Then he gathered all his strength. He gritted his teeth and tensed all the muscles in his body.

Sweat pearly on his face.

“Tail, CURL!” he hissed.

*\*PFFFT\**

He tried to be ANGRY at his tail.

Then he tried *flattery*.

After that, he tried SCARING a curl out.

Piglet prayed,

YELLED,

pet,

sobbed,

and sang a beautiful melody,

but nothing happened.

His tail was still perfectly straight.

Cat was sitting on the front stairs of the house. She licked her paw and dragged it over her ear again and again.

Then she hopped onto the windowsill and stretched herself out completely flat before curling up in the sun.

“I can’t believe I didn’t think of that!” Piglet exclaimed. “I can ask Cat!”

Piglet pressed his snout through the planks of the fence and twisted his head.

***SNAP!***

A small hole opened up and he slipped out.

“Hi, Cat,” said Piglet.

Cat opened one emerald-green eye and stared at him.

“I was just noticing how nicely you curled up on the windowsill. Do you know how I can get a curl in my tail?”

Cat shut the one eye.  
Piglet waited. And waited.  
He looked at Cat uncertainly.  
Should he just leave?

Suddenly, Cat opened both eyes into two narrow slits.  
“Sorry,” she said. “I’m not interested in pig’s tails. Ask Dog. He thinks everything is *sooo* incredibly fascinating.”  
“I can’t believe I didn’t think of that!” said Piglet, turning toward the doghouse with wide eyes.

“Hi, Dog,” said Piglet, his heart beating hard and fast.  
Dog was so hyper and wild. He jumped and barked and wagged his bushy tail.  
“PLAY!” Dog shouted eagerly, his tongue dangling from his mouth.  
“Sorry, I can’t... I actually have a question...”  
“ASK!” Dog barked.  
“Well, um...”  
“ASK!” he barked again as his tail wagged like a frantic windshield wiper.  
“So the thing is, I noticed the bend in your tail. Do you know how you got it?” Piglet asked.

“NOPE!”  
“But were you born with it or did you get it?”  
“It’s just like this!” Dog replied. “Every day! Wake up like this! Sleep like this!”  
“Oh,” said Piglet, disappointed. “I see.”  
“Ask!” the dog barked. “Ask Horse! Old! Wise!”  
“I can’t believe I didn’t think of that!” Piglet said and hurried off.

Horse was grazing at the edge of the woods, big and brown and swaying.  
Flies and gnats buzzed around him. His tail swept them away with long strokes.  
“Hi, Horse,” Piglet said meekly.  
Horse breathed heavily and turned around slowly.  
“Oh. It’s you, Piglet. What do you want?”  
“I was wondering, since you’re so old and wise, do you know how I can get a curl in my tail?”  
Horse whinnied a bit before stretching out his neck in one long motion and taking a big bite of thistle.  
“No... hmm,” he said, dragging out the last word. He snorted and thought to himself. “Maybe the birds know?” he said after a while.  
“The birds? All of them? Cuckoo? Goldfinch? Robin? Starling?” Piglet asked eagerly.  
Horse just tossed his head and nodded it up and down. Then he trotted off.

“The birds know,” Piglet thought with relief. “I can’t believe I didn’t think of that!”  
Now he was really onto something.  
Just then, Magpie came flying overhead. She chattered and cawed.

“Hi, Magpie!” Piglet shouted, but Magpie shot past him like a black-and-white arrow. Something shiny and wriggly fell from her beak and landed by the henhouse.

They were clucking and carrying on over there.

A cockcrow echoed over the yard.

“Rooster!” Piglet exclaimed.

“Rooster is a bird, right, even though he can’t fly?”

The hens were taking dust baths in the sun.

They spread their wings and kicked dirt and gravel over their feathers.

Rooster strutted around, keeping watch over everything.

Piglet thought he looked a little grumpy, but he knew he had to ask.

“Hi, Rooster,” said Piglet. “Can I ask you a question?”

Rooster stopped in his tracks and stared at him fiercely. His cockscomb shone bright red in the sun.

He was holding a fat, shiny worm in his beak.

He puffed up his neck feathers threateningly and strode toward Piglet.

Rooster cocked his head and stared greedily at Piglet’s tail.

Piglet tumbled backwards, terrified.

“**B-B-BAKAW!?!**” Rooster squawked, so loudly it hurt Piglet’s ears.

Piglet dashed away as fast as his little hoofs could carry him and squeezed behind the stairs. He would *never* let Rooster peck off his tail like a curly worm in the dirt!

This really hadn’t gone very well.

Piglet peeked shakily out from his hiding place. Everything looked completely normal out there in the yard.

Rooster shook his feathers and stood by the storehouse.

Horse strolled around in his pasture like before. Dog chewed on his bone and Cat slept.

The pigs lay side by side, snoring in their food comas. All the animals were happy.

All of them except for Piglet.

He sighed and scowled at his tail.

It was still perfectly straight.

“Is that you, Piglet?” a voice said from right next to him. “I’ve been looking for you!”

Little Girl was standing there with a bucket in each hand.

Piglet peered up at her with shining eyes. His snout was damp with snot.

“Hey, is something wrong?” Little Girl asked.

Piglet shook his head sadly with a snuffle.

“Yes. I don’t have a curl in my tail. It’s perfectly straight. I asked Cat and Cat told me to ask Dog and Dog told me to ask Horse and Horse told me to ask the birds, the birds know, but Rooster just wanted to peck my tail into a thousand pieces.”

Piglet said everything in one breath.

A tear ran down his cheek.

“My goodness! Don’t you worry about that. You don’t need a curl, you’re great just the way you are!” Little Girl said. “I like your perfectly straight tail!”

“But pigs are supposed to have a curl in their tails,” Piglet stammered. “Everyone has them. Straight is wrong!”

Then Little Girl laughed and shook her head.

“That’s not true! Wild pigs have straight tails.”

Piglet looked at her, confused.

“Wild pigs?” he repeated.

“Yup! They don’t have a single curl. They’re perfectly straight. And besides, all tails are perfect in their own way.”

“Are all tails perfect? How?” Piglet asked weakly.

“Yeah, all tails are unique, so they’re all perfect! Cat’s tail is perfect, Dog’s tail is perfect, Horse’s tail is perfect, Rooster’s tail is perfect, and your tail is also perfect. Perfectly straight!”

Little Girl shrugged and laughed.

Piglet thought about it.

A tiny light was kindled somewhere deep inside him. It grew and grew.

Little Girl leaned over and stroked his tear-stained cheeks.

“So, do you want to come to the forest with me and pick some blueberries, you little wild pig?”

Piglet nodded carefully. He liked that she called him wild.

Hmm, maybe he was a bit wild? He *did* break out of the pen, after all!

Plus, he had a perfectly straight tail.

A big smile spread across his face.

“Come on!”